

FOUNDATIION LUCIE OTAENGA (FLO)

Foundation Lucie Otaenga (FLO) is an organization of women and families which was formed years ago as a result of a small gift of three manual sewing machines, sewing fabric and a few sewing supplies given to a group of women at the Equatorial Rural Health Zone of Lotumbe. Under the leadership of Chantalle Bolingo, FLO successfully started a center where women are trained in sewing, sanitation, healthcare and nutrition. Women do not pay for their training, but rather sew uniforms for school children and hospital personnel. FLO's objective is to create jobs and generate profit for the benefit of the community.

FLO received a \$5,900 from the Ambassador's Special Self Help Fund. The funding was used to purchase hand driven sewing machines, sewing materials, and gardening tools. Carrying out this grant was no small feat. Roads are impassable, thus it was necessary to purchase supplies in Kinshasa, fly them to Mbandaka, and transport the cargo two days up river to Lotumbe. Despite the obstacles, FLO received the supplies and is now training entire families to raise a variety of nutritious vegetables resulting in a more balanced diet. The new materials have significantly increased FLO's capacity to train women and to produce positive results for the entire community.



